B. R. A. G.

BATON ROUGE ATARI* GROUP

October 1984

B R A G N E W S

Fellow Members.

   The September meeting had an increased participation than did the summer meetings. Part being the renewed efforts of Stan and Jay Brohn to revitalize the BRAG newsletter. They are mailing about 150 newsletters per month of which many of those are to different areas of the country. By the way if your name is not on the list to receive the letter please call (504 924-9066) or come by 1955 Dallas Drive and talk to Ja.. Computer Electronics is taking on the entire expense of the newsletter including postage. For their generosity and use of their building for our meetings I would like to give them a plug and remind you that they carry magazines. books. diskettes and discounted software including bargain boxes that you can look through. They also have the 800XL and the 1050 disk drives along with selected other hardware. They also provide Authorized Atari Service. Please consider thanking them for supporting us by supporting their business.

   At our September meeting Tom Halligan brought us copies of House Bill No. 1801. Act No. 711 which outlined offenses against intellectual property. against computer equipment and supplies. against certain computer users. and for computer fraud. Also he brought a copy of the Senate Bill No. 538 Act 744 which is relative to the Software License Enforcement Act.. One point was brought up and that was. the laws were not the best written and perhaps some of the users could improve on the wordings and pass them along to the Authors. We also discussed the disposition of surplus moneys that were collected from the membership. We came up with some agreement on the expendatrue of these funds. This will be explained in full at our next meeting. Other items on the adgenda are "Computer Banking" that will be shown by Stan Brohn. Henry Streiffer will give a demonstration of Codewriter which can generate database management programs to your specifications.

   I received a phone call from an Oklahoman who is now residing in this area. He was the president of one of three Atari groups in Oklahoma City. He is interested in our group and is going to try to make our next meeting.

   If you have any ideas. information or request please forward them to Stan. Jay. Henry. or Myself. Remember. the more information and ideas we share about our machines and systems the better off we will all be.

C U at the October meeting.

Bob

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Baton Rouge, LA 70806
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THIS IS IT — 1955 Dallas Drive
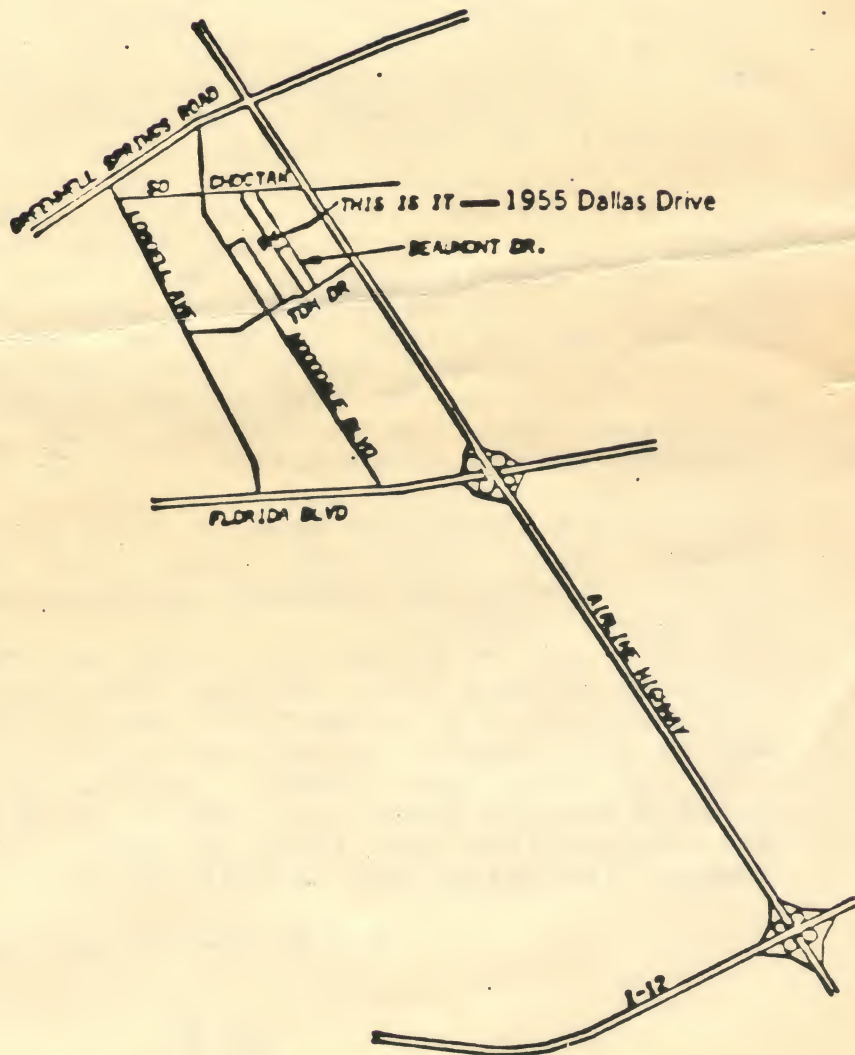
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BATON ROUGE ATARI* GROUP

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Merry Christmas everyone! The December meeting of BRAG will be Thursday December 13 at Computer Electronics, 1955 Dallas Drive at 6:30 pm. We hope to see everyone there.

Have you seen the latest issue of ANALOG (Jan. 85)? It has an interview with Jack Tramiel and James Copeland (VP of Marketing for Atari Corporation). There is also a brief on the Atari press conference. I've been told that Atari is still manufacturing the 800XL which should mean that parts will be around for awhile.

I just spent my Saturday repairing an 800 and an 810 and giving the bad news about the remains of an 850 interface that were connected to a TV that lightning had gotten into. I hate to look at the printer. My point, either unplug systems when not in use and/or purchase a surge suppressor. You can get the parts to install in your own power strip for less than ten dollars or purchase units from about ten dollars up.

During our December meeting, we will be having a system set up to copy our public domain software for those of you who are interested. We have about 30 diskettes covering many areas from games to education, music, and graphics. Bring your blank diskettes or purchase a new diskette with both sides filled. (Computer Electronics has blank diskettes available for a good price.)

Next year you might consider a rotating monthly program organization for each meeting. If two or three or even one or two of you would consider handling one meeting, you will be helping to add some variety to the meetings. You can do anything from showing a simple routine you may have written to demonstrating a new piece of equipment you may have received for Christmas. Your involvement in this club will keep it going strong. See me to sign up. Don't be shy. It's easy. All it will cost you is a little of your time. The whole club will benefit.

At this time there are still no dues for the club. You can thank Jay and Stan of Computer Electronics for footing the postage for us for the newsletters. Please give them your support, they surely have given us theirs. They not only provide us with a place to meet and pay our postage, but also have a BBS system set up and maintained. With their help the club should be able to continue for awhile without dues. (I believe that the Commodore club dues are $25.00/year.)

Again, hope to see you the second Thursday in December for our next meeting.

Bob

The following appeared in the November 5, 1984 issue of Info-world. You may find it interesting. It is written by John C. Dvorak.

What Jack Tramiel Says He's Going To Do Dept.

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What Jack Tramiel Says He's Going To Do Dept.

Currently, the new head of Atari is thinking along the lines of the 3 1/2-inch disk for his new personal computer. Insiders tell me the computer shapes us as follows:

It will be based on a 6-8 MHz 68000 and be similar to the Macintosh in functionality. It will come with a minimum 128k configuration and have 600 by 400 graphics. The number of colors has yet to be determined. The computer will have a built-in, eight-channel sound synthesis system and be equipped with a MIDI interface--the music synthesizer interface standard port developed by Roland, the music synthesizer company.

Some insiders are calling it the ATARI MAC because it is designed to run an icon-based operating system similar to that of the Macintosh.

The computer will utilize extensive custom VLSI (very large scale integration) chips for sound and graphics.

I have it on good authority that the target price will be $300. Hey, that's what I was told. I have to assume that means with no disk drive. It will be manufactured in the Orient.

Note: Tramiel is also lining up some 5- to 10-megabyte hard disks that he expects to sell for $200 with this machine. This is choice information for you investors and developers; take it seriously.

Earlier speculation was that Tramiel would go after AMIGA, a company that has reportedly designed a similar computer to these specs. My thinking is that COMMODORE got wind of Tramiel's specs for the ATARI MAC from one of the engineers that Tramiel lured away from COMMODORE--possibly still on the COMMODORE payroll. COMMODORE figured it had better buy AMIGA just in case Tramiel was depending on something to come out of the AMIGA-ATARI chip designing joint venture. Good strategy move by COMMODORE.

I figured that an ATARI MAC could be made and sold with a disk and monitor for $595, assuming COMMODORE 64/VIC 20 quality levels. ·

Other speculation has it that ATARI will, in the meantime dump all Atari inventory during this Christmas season to finance the final ATARI MAC. As one friend told me, "Gee, it would be great to get an ATARI 800 for $95."

Well? An interesting article isn't it.

835/1030 MODEMS
(Reprinted from Aug-Sep 1984 S.P.A.C.E)

The following information was obtained on the Atari SIG on CompuServe. It is a condensation of the documentation for a public domain handler for the 835/1030 Atari direct connect modems. The handler is available on the N.W. Micronet, 206-535-2837. When used as an AUTORUN.SYS it will allow the use of programs such as AMODEM with these modems.

The difference between modems is the way they handle the OPEN and CLOSE statements. Because of timing requirements, an RS232 device must be turned off if you want to use other peripherals like disk drives and printers. 850-based terminal programs do this by executing a CLOSE channel command before executing any I/O to other devices, and then an OPEN channel when they are ready once again for terminal I/O.

Unfortunately, a CLOSE channel issued to an 835/1030 modem will shut it off, hanging up the phone in the process. There are special commands to turn off an 835/1030 modem without disconnecting it — "Suspend" and "Resume". In an 835/1030 terminal program, you only OPEN the modem once, at the beginning of the program. Suspend and Resume commands are used to stop the modem temporarily to use other devices.

835/1030 Specific Commands

There are 9 commands specific to the 835/1030 modem. They are all passed without error, if an 850 is being used (with the exception of Suspend and Resume commands which are translated to their 850 equivalents). T: may need to be substituted for R:, depending upon the handler used.

    XIO 73,#channel,0,0,"R:"
    Puts the 835/1030 in Originate mode
    XIO 74,#channel,0,0,"R:"
    Puts the 835/1030 in Answer mode
    XIO 75,#channel,ASC("#"),0,"R:"
    Dials one digit. The "#" represents an ASCII character
    from 0 to 9.

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  Dials one digit. The "#" represents an ASCII character
  from 0 to 9.
XIO 76,#channel,0,0,"R:"
  Takes the modem "off hook". Picture this as taking hold
  of a telephone receiver and lifting it off the hook. Thus,
  off hook means putting the modem "on" the telephone line.
XIO 77,#channel,0,0,"R:"
  Puts the modem on hook. The opposite of off hook - hangs
  up the phone.
XIO 82,#channel,0,0,"R:"
  835 modems only: Routes the telephone signal to your TV or
  monitor speaker. Useful to listen in on a dialing sequence
  to hear whether or not the other side answers.
XIO 83,#channel,0,0,"R:"

Suspend command. See above.

Some Usage Points

1. Before you can execute most 835/1030 commands, you must Resume the modem if it has been suspended.

2. You should take the modem off hook before beginning a dialing procedure.

3. When using an 835/1030 modem, you can detect when the carrier has been dropped. Issue a Status command, and then check memory location 746 ($02EA). If the value is greater than 127 (high bit is on), then the carrier is present. Bit 0 of the same location is the hook status (a 1 means modem is off hook).

Tom Neitzel

65C02
(Reprinted from Nov 1984 Oregon ACE Newsletter)

Optimized Systems has available a CMOS version of the 6502 microprocessor, called a 65C02, which can directly replace the normal 6502 in an Atari computer. This chip requires less power, thereby running a lot cooler, and for the assembly language programmer, it offers 27 new OP codes. Currently, however, MAC65 is the only assembler to support these codes unless you write your own macros, or include it via a .BYTE command. Here are the new commands with a brief description of each:

BRA — branch always. This instruction works like all the other branch instructions, except it always branches, and is therefore like a JMP but taking up one less byte of memory and one less cycle to execute.

INA & DEA — Increment and decrement the Accumulator. Works the same as INX, DEX, INY, & DEY.

PHX, PHY, PLX, PLY — These instructions work like PHA and PLA instructions, only pushing the respective register instead of the Accumulator.

STZ — This stores a zero into the following location but doesn't affect any register. Address modes available are Absolute; Abs,X; (Zero page); (Zpg,X).

TRB — This complements the Accumulator, AND's it with the specified memory location, and stores the result in the memory location.

TSB — This OR's the Accumulator with the memory location, and stores the result in the memory location. Both TRB and TSB use only Absolute and Zero page addressing.

JMP (Absolute,X) — This instruction takes the absolute address, adds the X register, and jumps to that location. It is a very powerful way of setting up a table of JMP addresses, which are then indexed through the X register.

Additionally the BIT instruction has two new addressing modes; Absolute,X and Zero page,X.

There is also a very useful new addressing mode. A common assembly language instruction sequence is LDY #0, LDA (zp),Y

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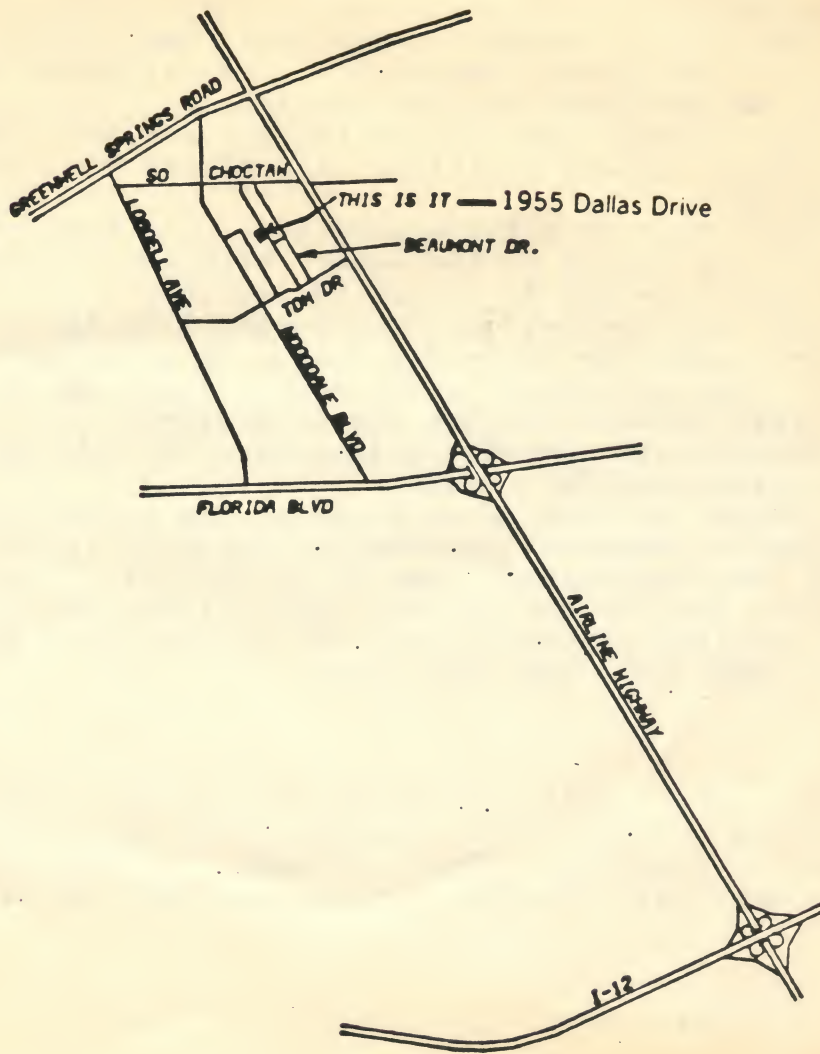
B. R. A. G.

BATON ROUGE ATARI* GROUP

Baton Rouge Atari Group Newsletter
January 1985

I hope that all of you had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. There are going to be a lot of new Atari users out there this year. Please try and help them get off on a good foot with their new machines.

Our public domain software that we are purchasing was about ten days late so I tried to call AMTYPE at their toll free number and found that it had been disconnected. Being concerned, I immediately wrote a letter and sent it certified to AMTYPE Corporation. I just received the return receipt back from them this week. In my letter to them I stated that we had only received two month's (plus a free month bonus) disks and that if they were unable to deliver the service for the remaining ten months to please return our $100.00 of the $120.00 I had sent them (6 months paid for by the club and 6 months paid for by me). I requested a reply within ten working days which should be due any time. I'll keep you posted.

There has been some interest in surge protection for computers since I mentioned the destroyed components that were found in an Atari sustem that had lightning damage. Of course, the best thing that can be done is to totally unplug the entire system from the television and from all power sources. The system I looked at had most of its damage done to the 850 interface and to the printer. One of the reasons I feel this happened is that the printer was a ground source for the lightning that came in on the TV signal feed line. Since the printer had a three-prong plug (the only ground in the Atari system), the ground was supplied for the static charge. This ground is needed for the printer so don't isolate it! If your system must be left hooked up to a TV that is connected to a cable or antenna, there are surge protectors available for about ten dollars up. If you are a do-it-yourselfer you can purchase a metal oxide varistor, a .1 mf at 1kv capacitor, and a .001 mf at 1kv capacitor for each outlet on your power strip. You solder the three parts across each outlet. The MOVs that I used can be purchased at most electronic supply houses and Radio Shack. The Radio Shack catalog number is 276-568 according to their 1985 catalog. I don't think Radio Shace sells 1 kv capacitors. The more expensive strips have a toroidal inductor included for each outlet. These are not readily available. You can make your own if you know what you are doing. I've seen these good strips with four outlets for as low as $49.95 ($89.95 list) in lot amounts by mail order.

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'B' means 'I want to read any special Bulletins on the board.'

'P' means 'I want to change my password.' (Unfortunately, some people think it's fun to screw up RBBS. Consequently many boards are setting up password systems for security.)

'T' means 'I want to talk to the sysop, so ring the bell on the RBBS computer and call him/her. (If the sysop is available, you can talk with him/her keyboard to keyboard. This is also 'C' on some RBBS systems.

'X' means 'I am an eXpert at using the RBBS and I don't need all these messages taking up my time, so just go into eXpert mode.'

'W' means 'Show me the Welcome message again.'

'G' means 'Goodbye, I want to disconnect from the RBBS.' (You'll be asked if you want to leave a private message for the sysop; do so it you want.   THIS is the place to pour out your problems, without being overseen by the general public if needed.)

'J' means 'I want to enter CP/M.' Use this to exit the RBBS into the CP/M operating system to download or upload software.

The next batch of commands relates to reading and posting mes-sages on the board.

'E' means 'I want to Enter a message.' (You'll be asked for information about the addressee of your message and its subject.) Then you just type it in.   Once you're done, you'll be presented with a short menu giving you the chance to correct errors (Edit) in your message, to delete your message - in case you change your ming - and/or to save and post it on the board where the addressee will find it.

'R' means 'I want to Read a message(s).' You'll be asked to specify the number of the message you want to read.

board. Again, you'll be asked for a message number.

'S' means 'I want to Scan the message(s) on the board; I want
more information than 'Q' gives me, but not as much as 'R''.

'K' means 'I want to Kill (erase) a message.' You'll be asked
for a message number.   For obvious reasons, you can only kill a
message you have posted, or one which is addressed to you.

If you want to 'R', 'Q', or 'S' a particular message, or do so
continously, or just to begin with a specific message, do this:

Follow the 'R', 'Q', or 'S' with a semi-colon (';'), then a
number.   For example, 'R;135' means 'I want to read message
number 135'.   For another example, 'R;135;+' means 'I want to
read all the messages beginning with number 135 and go up con-
tinously.

Private Messages:

Some RBBS systems allow a special password to be placed on mes-
sages entered, for privacy. This is a '*' character, used as the
FIRST character entered at the 'Password ?' prompt. Just skip it
with a RETURN, for a normal (public) message.

NOTE! THIS password has nothing at all to do with any system
access password, it is just a privacy measure, for messages ONLY.
In general, many systems do NOT encourage private messages be-
tween users, since it is contrary to the open forum idea. If you
need privacy, pick up the handset, and voice-it if you will.
Leave any necessary private info to the sysop as a comment - no
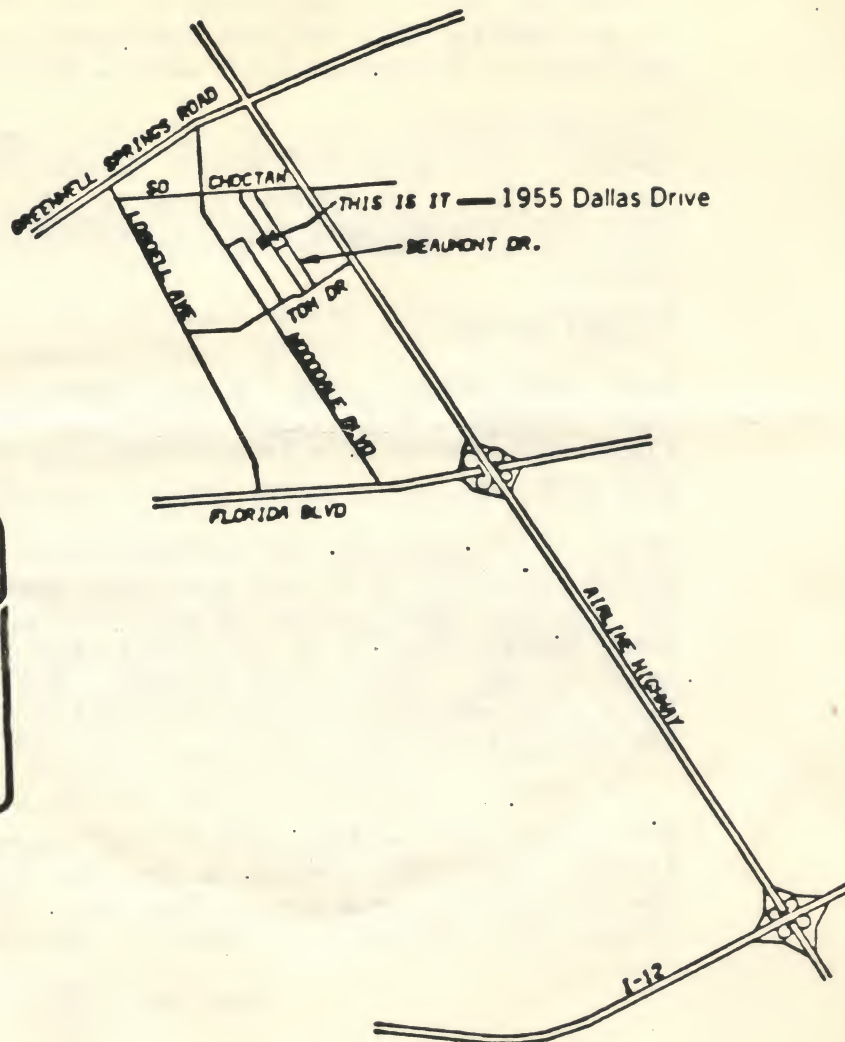one else will see it.

Well that's all we have room for this month.   We will continue
talking about RBBS systems in the next BRAG newsletter.   Happy
New Year everyone and see you Thursday. The meeting is Thursday,
January 10 at Computer Electronics, 1955 Dallas Drive at 6:30 pm.

Stan and Jay

N

GREENWELL SPRINGS ROAD

SO CHOCTAW

THIS IS IT — 1955 Dallas Drive

BEAUMONT DR.

LOBDELL AVE

TOM DR

GOODWOOD BLVD

FLORIDA BLVD

AIRLINE HIGHWAY

I-12

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